

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW POUCH
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BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

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TAGS: EFIS, EQIP, SCUL, PEPR, GY, UR
SUBJECT: BURNHAM'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

SUMMARY: THE GUYANA CHRONICLE, DISCUSSING THE VISIT OF PM BURNHAM TO THE SOVIET UNION, REPORTS THAT THE PM'S TALKS WITH CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV WERE "WARM AND FRIENDLY" AND THAT THE TWO MEN'S VIEWS WERE CLOSE OR IDENTICAL ON SEVERAL MAJOR ISSUES. IN ADDITION, THE TWO NATIONS SIGNED AGREEMENTS IN THE FIELDS OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT, FISHERIES, AND CLUTURE. THE AGREEMENT ON MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT ALLOWS THE GUYANESE TO PURCHASE GOODS WITH GUYANESE DOLLARS, WHICH THE SOVIETS WILL THEN USE TO BUY GUYANESE PRODUCTS. THIS SHOULD PROVIDE SOME RELIEF ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT FOR THE HARD PRESSED GOG. END SUMMARY.

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1. GUYANA CHRONICLE OF APRIL 20 HEADLINES PM BURNHAM'S "VERY IMPORTANT" APRIL 19 TALK WITH SOVIET CHAIRMAN LEONID BREZHNEV. ACCORDING TO CHRONICLE, THE TWO LEADERS TALKED FOR OVER AN HOUR COVERING SUCH TOPICS AS DETENTE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND GUYANA'S SOCIALIST THRUST, STRUGGLE AGAINST "IMPERIALISM", AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE CHRONICLE QUOTED THE SOVIET NEWS AGENCY TASS AS SAYING

THAT THE MEETING WAS "WARM AND FRIENDLY" AND THAT THE VIEWS OF THE TWO LEADERS WERE CLOSE OR IDENTICAL ON SEVERAL MAJOR ISSUES. IN A CONVERSATION WITH A TASS CORRESPONDENT, BURNHAM WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE TALKS WERE "VERY IMPORTANT" AND THAT THE OUTCOME WAS "GOOD".

2. THE APRIL 19 CHRONICLE CARRIED AN ARTICLE ANNOUNCING THE SIGNING OF THREE AGREEMENTS (FISHING, MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT, AND CULTURE) BETWEEN GUYANA AND THE USSR ON APRIL 18. GUYANESE MINISTER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATIVES HOYTE AND THE SOVIET MINISTERS OF TRADE AND OF FISHING AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTERS, AS APPROPRIATE, SIGNED THE ACCORDS.

3. THE CHRONICLE STATES THAT THE MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR TEN YEAR CREDIT FACILITIES AT 4.5 PERCENT ANNUAL INTEREST. THUS FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE MONETARY VALUE OF THE AGREEMENT ON MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT OR WHETHER IT IS A LONA OR A LINE OF CREDIT. THE SOVIET UNION, ACCORDING TO LOCAL MEDIA, WILL ACCEPT GUYANESE CURRENCY IN PAYMENT WHICH WILL THEN BE USED TO PURCHASE GUYANESE GOODS.

4. THE FISHERIES PROTOCOL PROVIDED FOR COOPERATION IN FISHERIES RESEARCH AND IN UTILIZING GUYANESE FISHING RESOURCES. IT ALSO ENUNCIATED PRINCIPLES OF FISHING AND SHRIMPING. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE GUYANA BROADCASTING SERVICE (GBS), HOYTE SAID THAT THE BUILDING UP OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IS A SLOW PROCESS. "YOU HAVE TO GET OVER THE GREAT HURDLE OF UN-FAMILIARITY", HE EXPLAINED. HE CHARACTERIZED THE AGREEMENTS AS A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT TOWARD FULL FLEDGED RELATIONSHIPS IN ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, AND CULTURAL MATTERS.

6. BURNHAM AND HIS RETINUE ARRIVED IN TASHKENT YESTERDAY. THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE OIL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH UNION INSTITUTE BEFORE LEAVING FOR NORTH KOREA LATER TODAY. FINAL PORTION OF TRIP WILL BE EAST BERLIN AND LONDON.

7. COMMENT: WHILE THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL RESULTS, IF ANY, OF BURNHAM'S TRIP ARE YET TO BE DETERMINED, THE ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS STRIKE US AS BEING QUITE ORDINARY. THE GUYANESE MEDIA HAVE HERALDED THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT AS "GENEROUS", BUT FURTHER DETAILS AS TO AMOUNT AND THE EXACT NATURE OF THE AGREEMENT HAVE NOT YET BEEN FORTHCOMING. PERHAPS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF THE AGREEMENT IS THE CONCESSION, CONTAINED IN THE MACHINERY

AND EQUIPMENT PROTOCOL, BY THE SOVIETS TO ACCEPT GUYANESE
CURRENCY, WHICH WILL THEN BE USED TO BUY GUYANESE GOODS.
THIS COULD PROVIDE SOME RELIEF FOR GUYANA'S SEVERELY
STRAINED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION.
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